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Freud's Egyptian Photographs: Scenes from a Library

Mary Bergstein

Sigmund Freud fantasized Egyptian antiquity throughout his life, culminating in his *Moses and Monotheism* (1939). Ancient Egypt was represented in the visual culture of his personal library, where meaningful constellations of photographs, captions, and texts catalyzed to feed his historical imagination. In this material, the photography of “art” (sculpture, archaeological fragments) was hardly separable from the new ethnographic photography that was so closely aligned with medical documentation. All of these images belonged to a common body of visual knowledge. These visual resources shaped Freud’s views of cultural history, evident in *Moses and Monotheism*, where antiquity and ethnography interfaced within a highly imaginative historical narrative.

Keywords: Sigmund Freud (1856–1939); Archaeological Photographs; Egyptian Sculpture; Mummies; Orientalism; Moses and Monotheism (1939)

Communication systems of art and archaeology, including photographs and their accompanying texts, are agents of meaning: they direct the historical imagination of spectators and they shape their styles of viewing art and artifacts. Archaeological photography around the turn of the twentieth century, with its rich chiaroscuro strategies and haunting reference to the remote past, belonged to a particular body of knowledge and a cultural system in which there was no rigid distinction between cultural artifact and natural or medical history in the reading of certain kinds of photographs. Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), the founder of psychoanalysis and inventor of the great “archaeological metaphor,” was not outside this cultural system as it then existed. For Freud, the excavation and reconstruction of repressed memory had a parallel—even a concrete model—in the archaeological dig, where fragments were carefully extracted from beneath the strata of time and put together patiently (if only hypothetically) to reconstitute an earlier historical situation and reveal the truth about the past. In this essay I explore how the cultural intersections of photography, psychoanalysis, and archaeology in Freud’s collection of Egyptian objects and photographs were constructed.

Although Freud never traveled to Egypt, ancient Egypt had a vivid presence in his historical imagination and in his visual field. A photographic postcard of an Egyptian relief of Alexander the Great with the god Amun-Ra was sent to Freud from Sándor Ferenczi (1873–1933) of Budapest in October 1913. The scrawled message on the



Figure 1 “Interieur d’un temple” (Relief of Alexander the Great with the god Amun-Ra). Postcard sent to Sigmund Freud from Hungarian psychoanalyst Sándor Ferenczi, 11 October 1913. Photograph. Image courtesy of Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna.

reverse of the card proposed that the two men travel to Egypt together the following September.¹ The relief, from a shrine erected by Alexander within the already ancient Luxor Temple, depicts the conqueror as a pharaoh in the blue crown presenting an offering to Amun-Ra in ithyphallic form (Figure 1). In light of this image, with the exciting message on the card’s verso, it is probably no mere coincidence that Amun-Ra is represented twice in Freud’s collection of Egyptian antiquities. His limestone relief sculpture of 301 BCE depicts Amun-Ra with Alexander’s general Ptolemy, who seized control of Egypt and declared himself king when Alexander died in 323 BCE, and a small bronze statuette of Amun-Ra had pride of place on Freud’s desk by 1914, as shown in an etching by Czech/Austrian artist Max Pollak (1886–1973).² Ellen Handler Spitz has written eloquently about the legacy of these objects in Freud’s personal and psychoanalytic thinking about Egypt.³

In addition to Freud’s own collection of small-scale Egyptian sculpture, the visual resources of Egyptian antiquity were extensive and diverse in his study at Berggasse 19 in Vienna. I have examined a sampling of illustrated books in Freud’s library in an effort to investigate the visual landscape of ancient Egypt that was familiar to the father of psychoanalysis and his educated contemporaries in Europe and the Americas. Among the editions consulted are: James H. Breasted, *A History of Egypt from the Earliest Times to the Persian Conquest* (1906); Sir Ernest Wallis Budge, *A History of Egypt from the End of the Neolithic Period to the Death of Cleopatra VII, BC 30*, vol. I (1902); Janet R. Buttle, *The Queens of Egypt* (1908); Hedwig Fechheimer, *Kleinplastik der Ägypter* (1921); and Georg Steindorff, *Die Blütezeit des Pharaonenreichs* (1900).

Several photographic illustrations in these books are particularly intriguing. I am speaking here of a body of morphological knowledge, where sculpted or painted

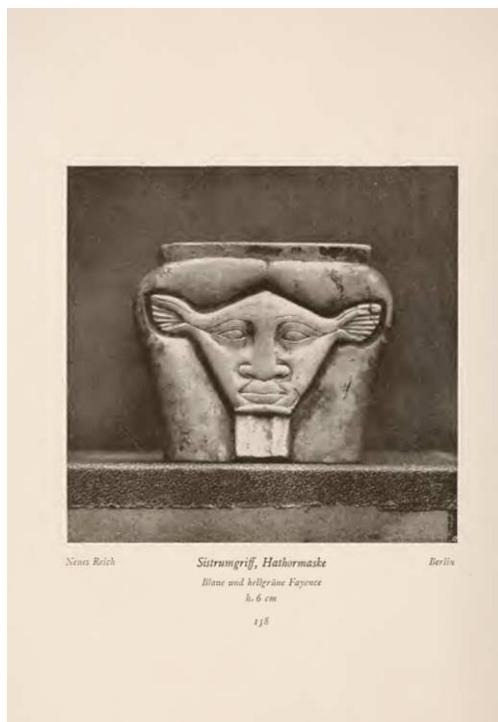


Figure 2 “Neues Reich, Sistrumgriff Hathormaske, Blaue und Hellgrüne Fayence, Berlin” [Mask of Hathor from the handle of a sistrum, New Kingdom, blue and light green faience, Berlin]. Photograph. Published in Hedwig Fechheimer, *Kleinplastik der Ägypter* (Berlin: Cassirer, 1921), p. 158.

facture (representation) was not necessarily distinguished from nature (biology), and where the making (aesthetics, techniques, and strategies) of photography and its graphic reproduction was seamless and mute, and therefore more or less immune to contemporary criticism. In looking back, we can analyze and critique Freud’s visual resources in terms of their image–text relationship, the history of psychoanalysis, and the historiography of art. Freud’s reception and reflections on these images were part of an overarching cultural context, as were his own library and sculpture collections.

The beauty of some of the photographs of Egyptian sculpture in Freud’s library was arresting and opulent. To open Fechheimer’s *Kleinplastik*, for example, is to open a jewel-box of small three-dimensional Egyptian objects such as Freud might aspire to own. The abstracted faience *Mask of Hathor*, from the handle of a sistrum (an Egyptian musical rattle), is made large in photography, disengaged from its context as part of a musical instrument (Figure 2). The object in its majestic isolation, set on the sturdy horizon of a shelf, looks modern and monumental decades before André Malraux’s photographic celebration of the sculptural detail in the middle of the twentieth century.⁴ In *Queens of Egypt*, an Eighteenth-Dynasty princess appears as a sort of fascinating waist-length portrait, seductive and serene, aglow in her chiaroscuro setting (Figure 3). In both of these books, objects were brought to life and made desirable in photographic representation—a typical turn-of-the-century strategy for representing the past.

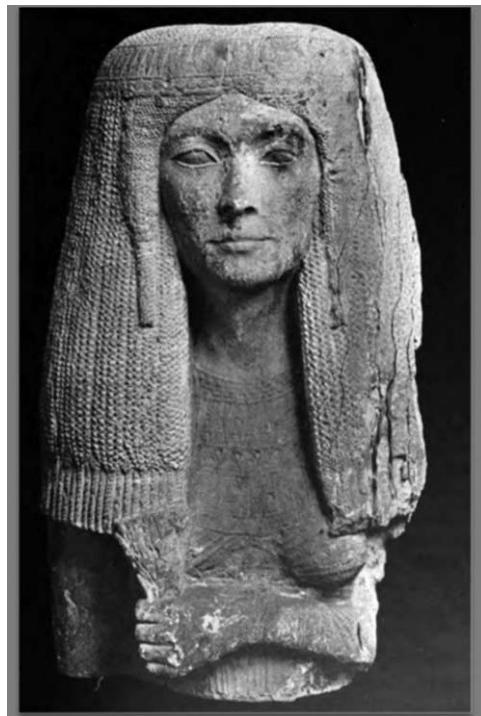


Figure 3 Giacomo Brogi (1822–1881), “An XVIII Dynasty Princess.” Photograph. Published in Janet R. Buttles, *The Queens of Egypt* (London: A. Constable, 1908), facing p. 56.

Many of the books and images familiar to Freud contained what may be described as an “ethnographic” photography of antiquity. That is to say, in the Orientalist thinking of the day,⁵ living Egyptians were equated with their ancestors in visual culture as if in obedience to the notion that Egypt was “timeless,” and their present was more or less equal to the past. Or perhaps these photographs, with their quality of documentary agency, actually served to *formulate* these ideas in a visual language that spoke more directly, cohesively, and unconsciously than words. Such images show us a kind of fantastic anthropology of Egypt as though the monotheistic Islamic middle-ages and early modernity had never existed, and Egyptians were locked in a primitive state of the remote past.

One fundamental purveyor of these pictures during Freud’s time was the company Underwood and Underwood of New York, who made stereoscopic viewing cards that were frequently taken apart and used as book illustrations. Underwood and Underwood produced many images where contemporary Egyptians exist in an environment of ruins of ancient sculpture and architecture, where age has worn the stones into organic forms that seem to seek a return to the natural setting of deserts and oases, and where living Egyptians relate to their sculpted ancestors as though Islam, with its prohibition on figurative statuary, had not at that point persisted for over one thousand years. The conjunction of modern Egyptians and ruins had precedent in drawings and paintings at least since the popular works of Scottish artist David Roberts (1796–1864).

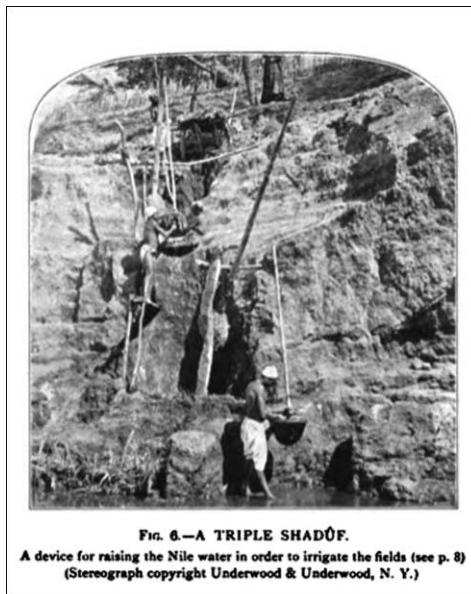


Figure 4 Underwood and Underwood, New York, "Fig. 6—A Triple Shadū. A device for raising the Nile water in order to irrigate the fields," Stereograph. Published in James H. Breasted, *A History of Egypt from the Earliest Times to the Persian Conquest* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1906).

James H. Breasted's illustration of the device for raising the water level of the Nile in order to irrigate the fields is a photograph of men at work, but Underwood's composition of the workers against the bank of the Nile (Figure 4), with its virtual lack of horizon, is startlingly like the New Kingdom paintings from Theban tombs that were part of one of the most spectacular finds of the nineteenth century, explored by French Egyptologist Gaston Maspero (1846–1916), and widely published throughout Europe in reproductive drawings and photographs. Numerous photographs include mummified or skeletal human remains and the contents of the tombs of Egyptian kings. Breasted's classic *History of Egypt*, for instance, offers photographs of human remains juxtaposed with those of sculptural artifacts. Fragments of human bodies and of historical monuments are given equal value as historical evidence. Several of the illustrations place human remains side-by-side with sculptural or epigraphic fragments in the same grouping on a single page (Figure 5).⁶ First published in 1905, Breasted's *History* retained the same sets of photographic illustrations in its later editions, published through the middle of the twentieth century, where maps, scenographic landscape photographs, sculpture, architecture, epigraphy, and photographs of skulls and mummified remains illustrate the condition of long ago and far away after the fashion of nineteenth-century photography. Postmodern scholars are therefore seeing the same romantic and folkloristic images of Egypt as did scholars of over a century ago, but perhaps with a more analytical eye toward the subjectivity of photographic meaning.

Mummies were archaeological objects that occupied an unusual ontological status somewhere between cadavers and sculptural portraits. In the Orientalist mode that



Figure 5 “Fig. 120.—Head of Thutmose III. (From his mummy. Cairo Museum); Fig. 121.—Head of Amenhotep II, son of Thutmose III (From the mummy still in his tomb at Thebes); Fig. 122.—Head of Thutmose IV, son of Amenhotep II (From his mummy. Cairo Museum); Fig. 123.—Amarna Letter, No. 296. Containing list of the dowry of the Mitannian King Dushratta’s Daughter, Tadukhipa. (Berlin Museum).” Photographs. Published in James H. Breasted, *A History of Egypt from the Earliest Times to the Persian Conquest* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1906).

collapsed time between ancient and modern, they communicated a maximum degree of ethnicity and human expression. At the same time, they stood as reminders of mortality and its uncanny opposite. In a more avant-garde situation in Paris of the 1880s, artists such as Paul Gauguin (1848–1903) and Edvard Munch (1863–1944) were fascinated by a Peruvian Inca mummy in the Musée de l’Homme at the Trocadero: that mummy appears in expressionist paintings by Gauguin and in Munch’s famous *Scream* (painted in 1893 and 1910).⁷

If picturesque Orientalism was a prominent cultural system in nineteenth-century Europe, then Egyptian mummies were exotic in terms of both time and space. French writer Théophile Gautier (1811–1872) described the taste for the temporal exotic to be even more seductive than that of geographic distance and societal strangeness. When Gautier stated that “nothing excites me like a mummy,” he was referring to the lure of deep temporal distance brought shockingly close to human observation.⁸ Freud knew mummies firsthand, from the Hapsburg Egyptian collection in the Belvedere Palace: a watercolor by Carl Goebel (1824–1899) of 1889 shows that at that time the bandaged mummies were shown in vitrines in front of their corresponding wooden coffins, surely a great point of attraction for the public.⁹ Freud owned the catalog of Egyptian sculpture, mummies, and their hieroglyphic transcriptions at

Miramar by Simon Leo Reinisch, *Die ägyptischen Denkmäler in Miramar* (Vienna: Braumüller, 1865).

Georg Steindorff's *Die Blütezeit des Pharaonenreichs* [The Golden Age of the Pharaonic Kingdoms] was illustrated with black-and-white photographs of a haunting intensity. In terms of wrapped and unwrapped mummies, skulls, and cadavers, it is spectacularly macabre throughout. This genealogy of the Pharaohs in photographs of sculpted portraiture and mummies is of a piece with the medical and archaeological photography that was most familiar to Freud. In Steindorff, mummified bodies and carved portraits were brought together within a common format of photographic illustrations. For example, the mummified head of Thutmosis II (Eighteenth Dynasty) in the Cairo Museum is photographed according to the same norms as isolated sculptural fragments, as if a work of art, and as evidence of an elevated ancient culture (Figure 6). At the same time, the portrait resides in the body itself, and it is accompanied (captioned in the text) by a medical diagnosis, concluding that Thutmosis had probably suffered at length from a severe disease, which caused him to lose his hair before death.¹⁰ An interface here between the historical human individual and his eternal, immortal self is thus established. Here, where mortality, immortality, exoticism, and the dead-come-to-life are overlaid in a single image, one senses the Freudian *Unheimlich*, or uncanny. A dead man *redivivus* is also "eternal." The explanatory text



Figure 6 “Abbildung 22. Kopf der Mumie Thutmosis' II. Im Museum zu Kairo.” [Mummy of Thutmosis II, Cairo Museum]. Photograph. Published in Georg Steindorff, *Die Blütezeit des Pharaonenreichs* (Bielefeld: Velhagen und Klasing, 1900).

about the Pharaoh's hair, in its absurdly diagnostic assumptions, brings us into the ambience of Jean-Martin Charcot's Salpêtrière in Paris (where Freud studied with the master in 1885–1886) and its particularly apposite uses of photography of the human body for medical and cultural interpretation.¹¹

In fact, one of the organs of the Salpêtrière, the journal *Nouvelle Iconographie*, had published an article by Joseph Grasset in 1896 titled "Un 'homme momie'" about a living "mummy-man" who had a case of hereditary syphilis.¹² A photograph of the boy called "mummy-man" shows his congenital condition of atrophied skin, muscles, and bones, to be identified and studied as a medical curiosity. What I want to stress here is that the captioned photograph of Thutmosis II in Steindorff's book and the "mummy-man" in *Nouvelle Iconographie* belong to the same family of images, the same body of knowledge, and the same kind of knowledge *about* the body. Thutmosis II and "mummy-man" are part of a single integral cultural system, which saw no rigid distinction between cultural artifact and natural or medical history.

Carl Jung (1875–1961) observed that mummies were powerful images of death in Freud's mind: in Bremen, directly before sailing for the United States in 1909, Jung chatted with Freud about the natural mummification of humans in the peat bogs of northern Europe and in the *Bleikeller* (lead cellar) of Bremen Cathedral. Jung maintained that Freud resisted the topic and that in one discussion of mummies over dinner Freud suddenly fainted, evidently because of the intensity of his own fantasies about these natural objects. Freud apparently interpreted all Jung's talk about mummies as a "death wish" against him.¹³ But Freud may have been primed for this personal horror in the privacy of his library. A pre-dynastic mummy in the British Museum, for instance, illustrated in Sir Ernest Wallis Budge's *History of Egypt* (Figure 7), is all too human and pathetic a cadaver for readers not to have a strong affective response to it. The diagrammatic drawings of tomb burials following the photographed mummy (Figure 8) are emblems of death in and of themselves. Only the skeletons and buried objects remain intact in this stark chthonic design.

During his brief visit to New York on the journey of 1909, Freud visited Chinatown and, in a burst of exoticism, commented that he was struck by the similarity of older Chinese men to "the mummies of Egyptian kings."¹⁴ Politically incorrect as this simile would be in the twenty-first century, the mummies of Egyptian kings loomed large in the visual imaginations of turn-of-the-century Europeans, and photography was a primary agent of this visualization.

Archaeologist-photographer Émile Brugsch (1842–1930) was one of the first to make romantic photographic "portraits" of mummies, which were, of course, ready-made portraits contained in the preserved bodies of the dead kings. The photograph of Thutmosis II in Steindorff's *Blütezeit* belongs to the same family of images as a photographic "portrait" of Pinudjem II (Upper-Egypt Military Commander and Theban high priest of Amun) published by Brugsch in 1881. In Gaston Maspero's *La Trouvaille de Deir-el-Bahari*, he labeled this photograph as a "portrait" taken from the mummy.¹⁵ In the nineteenth century, mummies themselves were considered a kind of ultimate portraiture, preserving the actual face of the dead for posterity. Archaeologists believed that the role of the ancient embalmer was to make the representation of the dead man so lifelike that he should, in fact, remain alive, just as the

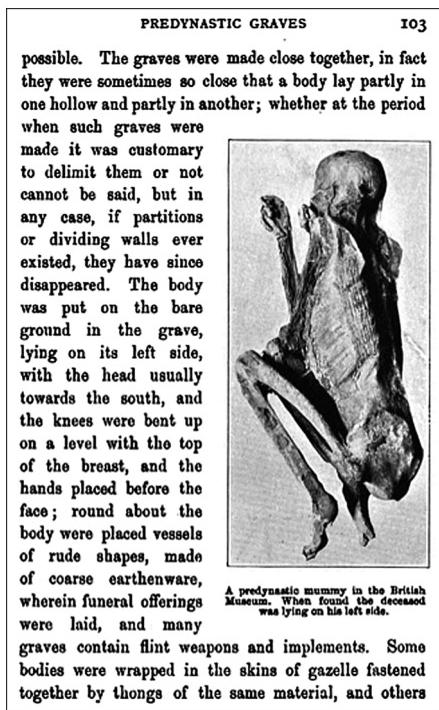


Figure 7 Antonio Beato (ca. 1825–1906), “A predynastic mummy in the British Museum. When found the deceased was lying on his left side.” Photograph. Published in Sir Ernest Wallis Budge, *A History of Egypt from the End of the Neolithic Period to the Death of Cleopatra VII, BC 30*, vol. I (London: Kegan Paul, 1902), p. 103.



Predynastic grave at Al-'Amrah, near Abydos. The deceased lying on his left side, and surrounded by his vases, flint weapons, etc. (Drawn by Mr. Anderson after M. J. de Morgan).

Figure 8 F. Anderson after Jacques de Morgan (1857–1924), “Predynastic grave at Al-'Amrah, near Abydos. The deceased lying on his left side, and surrounded by his vases, flint weapons, etc.” Drawing. Published in Sir Ernest Wallis Budge, *A History of Egypt from the End of the Neolithic Period to the Death of Cleopatra VII, BC 30*, vol. I (London: Kegan Paul, 1902), p. 104.

modern painter, sculptor, or photographer attempted to do according to the ideals of Western portraiture.

Another mummified head photographed by Brugsch, that of Ramses II (Nineteenth Dynasty), was received as no less than an insightful portrait, this time by Maspero himself, who discerned in the king's remains a "somewhat unintelligent expression, slightly brutish perhaps, but haughty and firm of purpose."¹⁶ The excavations of the Theban pharaohs by Maspero and Brugsch were considered one of the most romantic of all excavations in ancient Egypt. Freud had at least two of Maspero's books in his personal library, and Brugsch's sensational work in the unwrapping and photographing of mummies was very famous, as in his photo (1889) of the mummified head of Seti I (Nineteenth Dynasty) from Luxor, which was widely and repeatedly published image (Figure 9). Seti's mummy is photographed by Brugsch from below; the body's lowered eyelids and slightly open mouth create an inscrutable dignity. These photographed mummies constituted a kind of involuntary sculpture ("sculptures involontaires") before the time of Brassai (1899–1984) and the surrealists. Since mummified bodies were less contaminated with intentionality, they were therefore ostensibly more valid than their human-made counterparts in stone. The exposure of mummified bodies was an art of finding, rather than making, producing an image that was endowed with a special quality of the real. In this sense the revelation of mummies paralleled the art of



Figure 9 Émile Brugsch (1842–1930), "Fig. 158.—Head of Seti I. From his mummy, Cairo Museum," 1889. Photograph. Published in James H. Breasted, *A History of Egypt from the Earliest Times to the Persian Conquest* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1906).

photography. Photographs of mummies still seem to evoke a sharp primal thrill, an adventure of sensing the remote historical past together with the suggestion of physical immortality.¹⁷

The interpretive reception of these involuntary portraits fitted seamlessly into the tradition that governed the interpretation of all portraiture including statuary, painting, and posed studio photographs of living people. The head of another important Pharaoh from the Cairo Museum appears on the pages of *Die Blütezeit*: a stone portrait of Eighteenth-Dynasty Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten), found at El Amarna (Figure 10), is presented in a photographic composition mirroring that of the mummified Thutmose II. Steindorff's accompanying text praises Akhenaten for having introduced the single supreme deity, Aten. Since most Europeans of the time were at least nominally monotheists, Akhenaten's innovation was considered a precocious "discovery" of the single deity (the God of Judaism and Christianity) as opposed to merely an alteration in the style of ancient Egyptian worship practices. Although there is evidence of monotheism in Egypt long before Akhenaten's reign, the West regarded Akhenaten as the first Western-style monotheist.¹⁸

How did illustrated books such as *Die Blütezeit*, together with symphonies of archaeological photographs and the cultural expectations embedded in them, shape Freud's view of cultural history? In *Moses and Monotheism* (1939), Freud devised an ethnological profile of the Jews based upon their acceptance of the monotheistic,

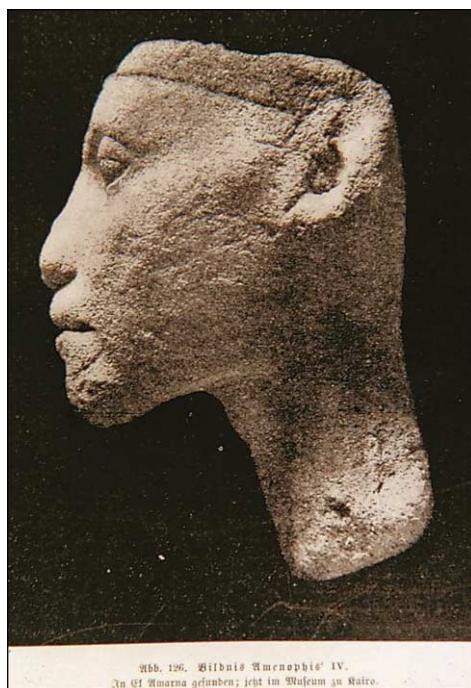


Figure 10 “Abb. 126. Bildnis Amenophis' IV. In El Amarna gefunden; jetzt im Museum zu Kairo,” Fragmented stone portrait of Akhenaten found at El Amarna. Photograph. Published in Georg Steindorff, *Die Blütezeit des Pharaonenreichs* (Bielefeld: Velhagen und Klasing, 1900).

abstract religion of Akhenaten. Freud's eulogy of Akhenaten as a personality who was responsible for the spiritual and philosophical advancement of humankind and the foundation of Judaism followed in the stream of arguments put forth by Egyptologists such as Steindorff. For Steindorff, the "portrait" of Akhenaten, a chiaroscuro photograph of a fragment of ruined stone sculpture, revealed the enlightened historical personage who first proclaimed "a single God, creator of all life, the lord of the entire world."¹⁹

Sociological documentary photographs of "Jewish types," as well as photographs of Egyptian sculpture, mummies, and men, may well have fueled the concept that Freud proposed that Moses was an Egyptian. The purpose of Freud's "historical novel" was, in his own words, "directed to the single aim of introducing the figure of an Egyptian Moses into the nexus of Jewish history."²⁰ *Moses and Monotheism* was written in a period of great stress near the end of Freud's life, and it recapitulated Jewish and Mosaic themes that had haunted him for many years. Literary theorist Edward Said has called *Moses and Monotheism* a "*Spätwerk*" or a composition in Freud's late style, comparable to Ludwig von Beethoven's final string quartets. These are open-ended works, highly expressionistic, with tantalizing themes and little interest in the satisfaction of closure or conclusion.²¹ The ethnological premise that "Moses was an Egyptian" was a fragile idea. According to Freud, Moses was an Egyptian aristocrat who gave his "chosen people," a Semitic tribe called the Levites, the monotheism that had been discovered in Egypt by Ahmenhotep (Akhenaten). Jewish monotheism, which rejected magic, sorcery, and anthropomorphic representation of the deity, had come about, then, after a period of somewhat complicated historical latency, from Akhenaten's "Aten" religion.²²

Freud claimed that, "In an astonishing presentiment of later scientific discovery [Akhenaten] recognized in the energy of solar radiation the source of all life on earth and worshiped it as a symbol of the power of his god."²³ As a scientist, Freud obviously saw this as historical progress, as an enormous step forward in Egyptian culture and in the civilization of humankind. For Freud the story of Moses was a dramatic historical saga of filiation and parricide. It is pertinent to *Moses and Monotheism* that in the sixth year of his reign, Akhenaten destroyed all the cartouches of his father, Ahmenhotep III, in an oedipal gesture necessitated by intellectual progress at the founding of his new, more abstract religion.²⁴ In *Moses and Monotheism*, Akhenaten's view of the cosmos presaged Freud's own, much later age of scientific discovery in Vienna. The Oedipus complex remains fixed in Freud's world historiography: Amenhotep IV had to become Akhenaten and reject his own patronymic as successor to Amenhotep III.

Freud's thesis that Moses was an Egyptian aristocrat from the circle of Akhenaten gave him the opportunity to characterize the modern Jews in terms of a revised historical ethnology. He stated that the Jews were not fundamentally different from Europeans, but rather they were the heirs to the Mediterranean civilizations from which they were descended and from whom they had retained phylogenetic memory traces: "They are not Asiatics of a foreign race . . . but composed for the most part of remnants of the Mediterranean peoples and heirs of the Mediterranean civilization."²⁵ Freud's anxiety that the Jews not be considered "Asiatics" but rather "civilized" Mediterraneans is a racialist absurdity that can be understood not only in terms of

Freud's education at a classical gymnasium, but also perhaps as a conscious or unconscious response to Nazi racial policies and the *Anschluss* of 1938, under the direct impact of which *Moses and Monotheism* was written. It is possible, especially in light of *Moses and Monotheism* that Freud searched for a Jewish ethnicity, including his own phylogenetic Mediterranean roots, in Egypt.

In *Moses and Monotheism*, Freud devised an ethnological profile of the Jews based upon their acceptance of the monotheistic, abstract religion of Akhenaten. Here it is pertinent to remember that for Sigmund Freud, statues, especially those isolated in photographic representation, contained figuratively and metaphorically, if not literally, a kind of inner consciousness or volition. Freud's attachment to Akhenaten as a knowable historical figure was such that at the Psychoanalytic Congress in Munich in 1912 he slipped off his chair in a dead faint when Carl Jung stated that Akhenaten's destruction of Amenhotep III's cartouches was probably not motivated by oedipal resistance.²⁶ Steindorff's illustration of Akhenaten was presented as if it were an absolutely authentic likeness of the historical personage. A fragmentary sculpted head that was juxtaposed so closely to the mummified head of a real human being could be analyzed—or even psychoanalyzed—as an historical individual, as though the cranial forms had enclosed the workings of a real mind. A photograph of sculpture, which could be searched in the same way as a biological specimen for evidentiary proof about the past, was, in all of its anthropomorphic object-ness, apprehended as far more revealing in scientific terms than, for example, a painted portrait of a contemporary personality. This condensation of past and present was always a salient feature of Orientalism: time was stopped and historical progress therefore denied in the exotic East.²⁷ The format of Steindorff's archaeological study and its photographic material testifies to the mentality described here and its internalization and application by thinkers such as Freud.

Above all, the photographs under discussion here possessed as much agency as written texts did in the formation of cultural beliefs. The photography of Egyptian objects may have caused a particular effect on Freud's historical biography of Moses or on his own version of the historical origins and history of the Egyptians and Jews. It would also, however, be accurate to recognize integrated visual systems as agents in the ongoing historical process, that is, to characterize the relationship in terms of prevailing mentalities and cognitive styles. In the nineteenth century, photographs of skeletons, mummies, and ancient art were frequently related to the study of the origins of racial difference.²⁸ When paired with salient texts in widely disseminated publications, subjects such as ethnographic Egyptian "types," documents of bizarre medical conditions, mummies, and carved portraits, the power of such photographs are deepened and quickened.

What I hope to show with Freud's illustrated books as silent witnesses is that the photography of "art" (sculpture, archaeological fragments) was hardly separable from the new anthropological photography that was so closely aligned with (psychiatric) medical practice. In diagnostic disciplines such as archaeology and medicine, where morphology was everything, documentary photography inspired great credence. But statues and mummies were, like dolls, anthropomorphic in their very essence and thus pictured as human figures in a certain kind of photography. Mummies of Egyptian pharaohs are perhaps the most anthropomorphic of all "art" forms representing

deities, or the deified kings of Egypt, and their photographs are uncannily “real.” In the subjective, transformative world of photography and photographic vignettes, these inanimate bodies were made whole on the page and, as it were, “brought to life.”

In looking back, we can analyze and critique Freud’s visual resources in terms of their image–text relationship, the history of psychoanalysis, and the historiography of art. Constellations of photographs and their accompanying didactic materials (captions, texts) contributed to the visual imagination and to a richly photographic cognitive style among turn-of-the-century thinkers, including scientists, art historians, and even the father of psychoanalysis himself. Indeed, visual resources were a striking component of the intellectual environment at Berggasse 19. This may be particularly interesting with regard to Freud, who taught us that visuality and subjectivity were present and active everywhere in the human mind.

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- 1 See Ernst Falzeder, Eva Brabant, and Patrizia Giampieri-Deutsch, eds., *The Correspondence of Sigmund Freud and Sándor Ferenczi*, vol. 1, 1908–1914, trans. Peter T. Hoffer (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 512.
- 2 Lynn Gamwell and Richard Wells, *Sigmund Freud and Art: His Personal Collection of Antiquities* (New York: State University of New York and London: Freud Museum, 1989), 47, 54.
- 3 Ellen Handler Spitz, “Psychoanalysis and the Legacies of Antiquity,” in Gamwell and Wells, *Sigmund Freud*, 153–58.
- 4 André Malraux, *La psychologie de l’art*, vol. 1, *Le musée imaginaire* (Geneva: Skira, 1947).
- 5 The term “Orientalism” refers to a biased representation of the culture and peoples of the East by Europeans. This set of attitudes was shaped by colonial rhetoric in Western historical writing of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The “Orientalist” fantasy of an “exotic,” “unchanging,” “mysterious” alternative to modern life is manifest in the visual arts, particularly in France. The Mediterranean Levant, especially Egypt, was represented in Orientalist stereotypes in the painting and photography of nineteenth-century France and throughout Western Europe and North America.
- 6 See James H. Breasted, *A History of Egypt from the Earliest Times to the Persian Conquest* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1906), illus. 77, 100, 120, 121, 122, 158, 170.
- 7 See Robert Rosenblum, *Edvard Munch: Symbols and Images* (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 1978), 7–8.

- 8 The Goncourt brothers citing Gautier in Edmund and Jules de Goncourt, *Journal: Mémoires de la vie littéraire*, ed. Robert Ricatte, 3 vols. (Paris: R. Laffont, 1989), I: 1033.
- 9 See Helmut Satzinger, *Die Ägyptisch-Orientalische Sammlung. Das Kunsthistorische Museum in Wien* (Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 1994), inside cover. This material was reinstalled in the Kunsthistorisches Museum after 1891.
- 10 Georg Steindorff, *Die Blütezeit des Pharaonenreichs* (Bielefeld: Velhagen & Klasing, 1900), 36.
- 11 Forbes Morlock, “The Very Picture of a Primal Scene: Une leçon clinique à la Salpêtrière,” *Visual Resources* 23, 1–2 (March–June 2007): 129–46. This was a special double issue, *Visual Documentation in Freud’s Vienna*, edited by Mary Bergstein.
- 12 *Nouvelle Iconographie* IX (1896): 257–64, plates XXXVII–XLI.
- 13 C. G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, ed. Aniela Jaffé, trans. Richard and Clara Winston (New York: Vintage Books, 1961), 156; and see Freud’s travel journal, August 1909, in Christfried Tögel, ed. *Sigmund Freud: Unser Herz zeigt nach dem Süden, Reisebriefe 1895–1923* (Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 2002), 285, where he commented upon a mummy preserved in the cathedral of Bremen: a medieval worker who had tumbled to his death from the roof was put aside in a space where the body accidentally dried rather than decomposing, forming “an image like a mummy,” which escaped the transitory nature of history and life itself.
- 14 Tögel, *Sigmund Freud*, 302.
- 15 Gaston Maspero, *La Trouvaille de Deir-el-Bahari* (photographs by Émile Brugsch) (Cairo: F. Mourés & Cie, 1881), 34.
- 16 James A. Baikie, *A Century of Excavation in the Land of the Pharaohs* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1924), 162.
- 17 Heather Pringle, *The Mummy Congress: Science, Obsession, and the Everlasting Dead* (New York: Theia, 2001), 23.
- 18 Edward Said, *Freud and the Non-European* (New York: Verso, 2003), 33.
- 19 Steindorff, *Die Blütezeit*, 144–46.
- 20 Sigmund Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*, 1939, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (London: Hogarth Press; New York: Norton, 1981) [1937–1939], vol. 23: 52.
- 21 Said, *Freud and the Non-European*, 27–30.
- 22 Freud, *Moses*, 66.
- 23 Freud, *Moses*, 59.
- 24 Jack J. Spector, *The Aesthetics of Freud: A Study of Psychoanalysis and Art* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1972), 62–63.
- 25 Freud, *Moses*, 91.
- 26 Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, 157.
- 27 Linda Nochlin, *The Politics of Vision: Essays in Nineteenth-century Art and Society* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1989), 35, 38–39.
- 28 Pringle, *Mummy Congress*, 167.